

THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

pro bono humani generis

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Dr. Arnold M. Ludwig
U. of Ky.

Dear Arnold:

I apologize how tardy this letter is, responding to yours of Nov. 2. Perhaps you will understand if I mention that in the interval, I have been on separate trips to Bangkok, Stanford, and Paris; not to mention countless shuttles to Washington. Of possible psychiatric interest, my latest govt.-advisory assignment has been to chair a study for Sec-Def on the health problems attributed by veterans to their experience in the Gulf War. Bob Ursano from USUMS, and his associate Anne Norwood, have been very helpful. I do accept this as necessary public service; but it has done my lab work no benefit, not to mention other obligations and correspondence.

I did make some notes whilst traveling, and I transcribe them now for legibility, though I am not always certain what I had in mind at the time.

Critique (as requested) of Ludwig's ms.

MAINLY -- and this bears on templates, etc.

too ONE-dimensional a view of creativity. A "great" athlete is not in the same universe as an Einstein.

There are numerous, sometimes disparate inputs and outputs, and latter are entangled in definitional issues.

The outputs include:

analytical intellect

taste in choice of problems

social and political skills to shape environment; PR

self confidence and humility

Inputs, and mediating factors include
neurological substratum {and the prior nature-nurture complexes}
psychosocial, motivational cycles.
Learning to learn, and learning to like it.
Eliciting nurturance from teachers.
disinhibition and imagination
luck

[Cf. my table on paradoxes in P-273]

Re inspiration to achieve -- sources of ambition, willingness to work.
imaginably, childhood illness and compensation (Emerson?);
compensatory hypertrophy metaphor
neutralize the tyranny of peer groups!
In my own development, illness was certainly no factor. I did have a
sense of "gift", and obligation connected with it. Perhaps relate to some kind of:
Oedipal competition "may partly beg the question?"
converse (esp. mobile immigrants) transfer of ambition to fl.
Sources of superego

Unique to myself as child: voracious appetite for learning, not just
science -- embraced history, philosophy, economics
"I wanted to know everything".

Re: "how I am distinguished from others". I covered this in a prior letter. Perhaps add my
involvement in policy [cf introductory paragraph of this letter.]

I don't at all mind being on the couch: it is helpful for my own autobiographical insight, the
book I am composing.

A happy new year,

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg